



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
284TH BASE SUPPORT BATTALION
UNIT 20911, BOX 0001
APO AE 09169-0001

AETV-GSN-CO

5 Aug 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Command Policy Letter 20, Breastfeeding within the 284th Base Support Battalion (BSB)

1. BACKGROUND:

a. Extensive research shows diverse and compelling advantages to infants, mothers and families from breastfeeding and the use of human milk for infant feeding. These advantages include health, nutritional, immunologic, developmental, psychological, social, economic and environmental benefits.

b. Epidemiological research indicates that breastfeeding and feeding infants with human milk decreases the incidence of a number of childhood diseases, ailments, and syndromes. Breastfeeding and feeding with human milk also entails significant health benefits for mothers. Women who have a significant history of breastfeeding have lower rates of ovarian, endometrial, and breast cancer compared with the general population. Lactation affects calcium metabolism, with increased bone density after weaning, and may decrease a woman's risk of postmenopausal osteoporosis. Increasing the rates of breastfeeding initiation and duration is a national health objective, and a national prevention initiative to improve the health of all Americans.

c. One World Health Organization code is "conscious that breastfeeding is an unequalled way of providing ideal food for the healthy growth and development of infants; that it forms a unique biological and emotional basis for the health of both mother and child; that the anti-infective properties of breast milk help to protect infants against disease...appreciating that there are a number of social and economic factors affecting breastfeeding, and that, accordingly, governments should develop social support systems to protect, facilitate and encourage it, and that they should create an environment that fosters breastfeeding, provides appropriate family and community support, and protects mothers from factors that inhibit breastfeeding".

d. Multiple obstacles reduce the number of mothers who continue breastfeeding after returning to work. Such obstacles include finding an adequate place for feeding or expressing (pumping) milk, finding the time or flexibility to feed or express milk during working hours, using workspace to store milk, and general concerns about the social acceptability of feeding or expressing milk within the workplace.

e. A workplace supportive of nursing mothers will reap many benefits to include less employee turnover, reduced absenteeism, and lower health care costs. Most supervisors are

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sympathetic to the needs of nursing mothers, and are very supportive of their employees when breastfeeding concerns are brought to their attention. However, employees must be encouraged to discuss their needs with employers; and the 284th BSB will take the lead to assist all employers in establishing positive breastfeeding policies in the workplace.

2. Therefore, Supervisors of Appropriated (AF) and Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF) civilian employees within the 284th BSB are encouraged to use Alternative Work Schedules in order to assist nursing mothers during the course of breastfeeding. Alternatively, supervisor may allow short breaks at the office during the course of the workday for AF and NAF civilian employees who choose to express milk at work for their children.
3. Supervisors of civilian employees will support information resources for breastfeeding women provided by ACS Family Advocacy Program, Women, and Infants & Children Overseas, Mom2Mom Points of Contact and health care professionals.
4. Directorates with visiting clientele are encouraged to make all reasonable efforts to ensure that patronized facilities utilize existing spaces to provide an area for breastfeeding mothers to nurse comfortably in a private or semi-isolated area. The area should be clearly indicated with a posted sign (encl), and a chair with arms will be available whenever possible.
5. Child & Youth Services (CYS) staff will receive education on breastfeeding relationship to optimally support nursing couplets, as well as promote and protect the extended advantages of breastfeeding within CYS services, CYS Staff will encourage visitation of breastfeeding mothers during break periods in order to facilitate direct nursing when possible.
6. Point of Contact for this Command Policy is the undersigned at DSN 343-1500.



BART U. SHREVE
LTC, SF
Commanding